

In Attendance: Cllr Caroline Hubbard, Cllr Trevor Jakeman (**Chair**), Cllr Sue Robinson, Cllr Bobbie Torkington (**Vice-Chair**), Cllr Clive White, Karen Cramoysan (Clerk), 1 Member of Public.

12 **Apologies for Absence** - Cllr Ken Kershaw

13 **Declarations of Interest** - None

14 **Public Participation** – New Allotments Representative, Nick Waterman spoke on various allotment issues and these were minuted under the relevant agenda item.

15 **Minutes of 26th May 2026 - RESOLVED:** Minutes were received and signed by the Open Spaces Chair as an accurate copy.

Matters Arising at Chair's discretion (if not covered by the agenda below):

Additional bin in Recreation Ground – RESOLVED: Clerk has finally heard back from Streetscene at NFDC and has been given our scheduled collection days; Tuesday & Friday, plus two other collection days in the week. They will arrange for a 20% credit to be given to us for the missed bin services since April. If the bins are emptied as per the contract schedule, then no additional bin is required. Clerk will chase NFDC for the promised credit as this has not yet been received in the bank.

Insurance Claim for vandalised Bus Shelter – Clerk advised that she has chased this again with the insurance advisor but has still not received any answer. Clerk will chase again with central claims department in case the advisor she was dealing with has left the company.

16 **Play Area Graphics** – It was agreed at a Full Council Meeting that nothing would be done with rectifying the graphics otherwise it could cause a shrinkage issue in the future.

Plaques for Free Trees – Cllr Jakeman advised that all but two of the memorial trees now have plaques installed; the adopters for Tree No. 8 have not yet responded to him and the adopter of Tree No 7 declined as the tree is failing. It was noted that the plaques are beginning to weather and change colour.

The Clerk reported that Amazon sell 75L tree-watering bags for £29.99, which may be considered for future planting projects if additional new trees are installed.

Cllr Hubbard was pleased to report that a resident had contacted the Clerk to ask about the story behind the name on one of the memorial trees she had adopted in dedication to her father. It is encouraging that residents are noticing and engaging with the plaques

17 **Recreation Ground:**

1. **ROSPA & Quarterly Play Inspection – RESOLVED:** Kompan have already dealt with the issues flagged on their equipment. The Fire Truck needs sprucing up as the paintwork is beginning to look worn. It was **AGREED** to ask the Handyman if he can repaint this.
2. **CIL Bid for Path Repairs – RESOLVED:** Clerk has applied for the grant. We will find out in October if we are successful and if so, payment will be made in February 2027.
3. **Tree Works after Annual Inspection - RESOLVED:** The High-Priority tree works were carried out on 17th June and Medium-Priority works were done on 16th August.
4. **Work carried out by Handyman – RESOLVED:** All works issued have been dealt with. Cllr Jakeman advised that the bench in the woodland area could do with a second coat of varnish as it is looking patchy. Clerk will contact the Handyman to arrange this.
5. **Tree Works adj to 25 Lakewood Road - RESOLVED:** The Clerk advised that the scheduled work will be carried out on 9th September by Nightingale Groundcare. She noted that ongoing maintenance of these trees should be included in the contract as an annual cut to

prevent them becoming overgrown again and requiring further hard cutbacks. The Clerk will contact Will to arrange this.

6. **Wildplay Decking Repairs following tree felling in June - RESOLVED:** These have been satisfactorily carried out by HRG Tree Surgeons.

Cllr Taylor reported via the Councillors' WhatsApp group that a rope swing had been attached to a tree within the old Timberline area. A child attempted to use the swing, which broke, causing the child to fall; fortunately, no injury was sustained. It was **AGREED** that she remove the swing. Cllr White advised that some children later knocked on his door asking for it back, and he explained why it had been removed.

A further trinket box has appeared on the trees at the top end of the park. As this is the second item of this type to appear in or near the Recreation Ground, Councillors agreed that this is something younger residents would like to see in the village. It was **AGREED** to purchase a purpose-built box from Amazon and site it within the Recreation Ground on a trial basis. If it is misused or vandalised, it will be removed. Once installed, the Clerk will inform residents that only this designated box may be used and that any unauthorised trinket boxes found on Council property will be removed.

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Community & Environment:

a) Allotments

1. **Gate Lock – RESOLVED:** Combination padlocks are now on all gates. Handyman has cut off the old lock on the pedestrian gate as the barrel inside had dropped down. It was **AGREED** by all Councillors for plot holders to dispose of their keys and for the Clerk to start refunding allotment key deposits to plot holders.

2. **Community Payback – RESOLVED:** were last on site on the first Tuesday in August but haven't returned to site since. They have cleared the ditch between us and Totton allotments.

3. **Rat Culling - RESOLVED:** Night shoot carried out on 10th August but unfortunately did not result in any rats being culled. No rats were observed on that evening. A free of charge daytime shoot has been negotiated by the Clerk and Darren from Plot 27 and it will be undertaken by the same company (Safeguard) within the next couple of weeks. Since the problem was first reported to our usual pest control company (Five Star) they have undertaken 6 extra visits to site (they will only charge us for 3 visits) and have installed 10 extra bait boxes at £420.00) to try and get this problem under control.

4. **To Arrange a date for Allotment Inspections: RESOLVED:** Cllrs Hubbard, Jakeman and Torkington will carry this out on Wednesday 9th September at 10:30am. Nick Waterman will accompany Councillors on future inspections next year but is unable to make this date. It was **AGREED** that any plot issues found will be relayed to him first so that he can speak to the plot holder before any letters are sent.

5. **Fence Repair: RESOLVED:** This has now been carried out by Totton & Eling Town Council.

6. Toilet;

- a) **Vent repair - RESOLVED:** The vent has been re-installed on the roof by the handyman
- b) **Sawdust - RESOLVED:** This has been purchased and 2x 20kg bags are in the toilet
- c) **Waste Pipe - RESOLVED:** Cllr Jakeman moved this over to the other chamber in June.
- d) **Door Lock - RESOLVED:** Cllr Jakeman repaired this in June

7. **To look at proposals and agree costings for ongoing allotment pest control maintenance – RESOLVED:** The Clerk provided Councillors with a detailed breakdown of allotment expenditure since April 2026. The allotted annual budget has already been nearly exhausted, primarily due to significant water usage costs and ongoing pest control, including repeated rat-culling treatments.

Councillors noted that plot holders will need to contribute more towards the running costs of the allotments. Plot fees have not increased for 3–4 years, and there is a growing expectation among some plot holders that the Council will continue to fund expensive pest-control measures indefinitely. Councillors agreed that it would be unfair to increase the Precept for all residents to cover these rising costs, particularly as only 26 of the 46 plots are held by Ashurst & Colbury residents. The remaining plot holders are non-residents who do not contribute to the Precept.

The Clerk has carried out a benchmarking exercise, reviewing fees and services offered by other Parish Councils with allotments across the New Forest and South Hampshire. This comparative information has been circulated to Councillors in a written report.

The item has been deferred to the September Full Council Meeting, where Councillors will make a decision regarding: an increase in plot fees, and additional charges for non-resident plot holders; not letting plots to non-residents on the waiting list.

8) To welcome new Allotments Representative – Nick Waterman - RESOLVED: This was Nick's first Open Spaces meeting; he advised that he has emailed all plot holders to introduce himself and has asked the Clerk to email them also to let him know his dedicated allotment email address; nickwaterman18a@gmail.com. To cut down on the Clerk's workload and Cllr Jakeman's involvement with potholder's issues, Nick will be the plot holders first point of contact and will bring any items of concern to the next Full Council meeting unless it is of an urgent nature and needs a response immediately.

b) Bus Shelter Grant from HCC– RESOLVED: The majority of the Bus Shelters have been repaired now; one repair is still ongoing presently. The wooden shelter outside Ashurst campsite has been replaced with a metal one.

c) Proposed 20 mph limit in Whartons Lane - RESOLVED: Cllr Kershaw was not in attendance at the meeting but had written a report advising that HCC will not charge us a licence fee to have Lyndhurst's SLR for a week. Dave Donawa rang the Clerk to advise that Cllr Kershaw had told him the same thing, but he was awaiting confirmation from HCC before scheduling this in with Lyndhurst PC. Item deferred to September Full Council Meeting.

d) Benches - RESOLVED: Cllr Kershaw advises in his report that the location of the two new 'perch benches' need to be agreed as per his report to July Full Council Meeting and whether we wish to go ahead with this using the remaining S106 funding.

19 Precinct:

a) Planters - RESOLVED: Cllr Hubbard advised that the watering rota will continue until 5th September. Six volunteers have expressed interest in continuing next year, and only one new volunteer came forward following the appeal in the Parish magazine. It was noted that two planters — one under the tree and one near the dog bin by the Happy Cheese — are beginning to rot. Due to the reduced number of volunteers and the low level of new offers of help, the Parish Council felt that resident interest in the planters is declining. As a result, there is no justification for replacing the rotten planters.

It was **AGREED**: that the gardener will remove any salvageable plants from these two planters after 5th September and relocate them into the remaining three planters. The Clerk will contact the Handyman to arrange removal of the rotten planters after 5th September. Cllr Torkington will contact the gardener to organise the plant transfer. The remaining planters will be run down, and no winter stock will be planted this year.

20 Summer Fete – RESOLVED: All is progressing well; there was a final Working Party meeting just before the Open Spaces meeting. All will meet back on site next Friday (4th) to sort out the preparations for the following day.

21 Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 24th November at 2pm.

Meeting closed at 3:35pm

Signature:	
Date:	

DRAFT